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New York

President:	Mrs. Albright	(United States of America)
Members:	Chile	Mr. Insulza
	China	Mr. Qian Qichen
	Costa Rica	Mr. Naranjo-Villalobos
	Egypt	Mr. Moussa
	France	Mr. Védrine
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. da Silva
	Japan	Mr. Obuchi
	Kenya	Mr. Musyoka
	Poland	Mr. Rosati
	Portugal	Mr. Gama
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Chong Ha Yoo
	Russian Federation	Mr. Primakov
	Sweden	Ms. Hjelm-Wallén
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Cook

Agenda

The situation in Africa

97-86050 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 9.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The President: Members of the Security Council will recall that the date and agenda for this meeting of the Security Council were agreed upon by members of the Council in its prior consultations.

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Africa

Invitation to His Excellency Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe and current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I request the Chief of Protocol to escort His Excellency Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe and current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, to a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe and current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

Invitation to Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I invite His Excellency Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, to take a seat at the Council table.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, took a seat at the Council table.

Welcome to Foreign Ministers

The President: I am very pleased to acknowledge that at this meeting of the Security Council all members of the Council are represented by their Ministers for Foreign Affairs. I welcome their presence at the Council table.

I should also like to acknowledge and welcome the presence of other Ministers for Foreign Affairs in the Council Chamber today. Their presence is an affirmation of the importance of the subject matter to be addressed at this meeting.

The spirit of cooperation demonstrated by all those present here, which has made this meeting possible, is greatly appreciated by all of us.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council is today holding its first ministerial meeting on Africa. This unprecedented meeting takes place at a time when there is a new partnership in global responsibility, one which is shared by all members of the Security Council and by the international community as a whole. In recent years the members of the Security Council have worked together and have achieved a number of successes in tackling some of the most complex, critical and challenging issues facing the international community. Today's meeting is intended to focus the attention of the international community on the situation in Africa. This meeting provides an opportunity to assess the present and to help lay the foundations for a peaceful and prosperous future for the African continent. We trust that today's meeting will spur our common efforts to assist the peoples and nations of Africa as they build that future.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/1997/730, which contains the text of a letter dated 22 September 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting a letter of the same date from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of Argentina addressed to the President of the Security Council, concerning today's meeting.

It is my privilege to call on the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe and current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, His Excellency Mr. Robert Mugabe.

President Mugabe: In the past the United Nations General Assembly and the Organization of African Unity Council of Ministers have adopted resolutions on cooperation between the two Organizations. Those resolutions have over the years provided a framework in which a nascent partnership was beginning to find sustenance and added impetus.

Today I would like, at the very outset, to thank the Security Council for convening this special ministerial meeting with the purpose of launching a new partnership between the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations. This initiative is most commendable and welcome. We hope the deliberations of this meeting will be carefully examined by both the Security Council and the General Assembly with a view to producing an action-oriented resolution that will not only help launch that new partnership but also ensure that it is nurtured in order to make a substantial contribution to the African renaissance.

Security Council meetings and debates on African issues were in the past often convened on an ad hoc basis and were devoted to addressing crises and armed conflicts afflicting one country after another on the continent. I believe today's meeting is different in a unique way. It is being held against the backdrop of a perceptible African renaissance, a rebirth and a renewal, that is reshaping not only African societies but also Africa's relations with the rest of the world. We hope that this special meeting will provide greater momentum to this process.

The post-cold-war era has presented Africa with the unique opportunity to take greater responsibility for and control over its fate without undue and often disruptive foreign interference. In so doing, we seek to cement our constructive ties with the rest of the international community. Thus, in the area of peace and security Africa's decision and determination to take greater responsibility for and leadership in the resolution of African crises, including armed conflicts, are being pursued in full cognizance of the symbiotic relationship that exists between African countries, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations.

The United Nations Security Council is endowed with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. There can therefore never be an exclusively African agenda for peace. It will, perforce, be the United Nations agenda, to which the entire international community subscribes and lends support. This is our understanding of the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, which is devoted entirely to cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

We in the Organization of African Unity place a premium on the establishment and maintenance of peace and security at the national, regional and continental levels for the achievement of sustainable economic growth and development. Conversely, we strongly believe that the peace and security that we so ardently seek to achieve cannot be attained in the conditions of abject poverty that are prevalent in Africa today. We are convinced that a politically stable, prosperous and vibrant Africa is the best place to contribute to greater global peace and security.

Through such subregional groupings as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), we have activated subregional mechanisms in the search for solutions to subregional crises. The Organization of African Unity itself, through the Central Organ of the Organization of African Unity Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, has endeavoured to play its part in these efforts. International support to such efforts, including in the area of capacity building, is needed for these institutions and mechanisms to play their role effectively in support of the United Nations peacekeeping activities in Africa.

The beginning of this decade has witnessed a phenomenal increase in the number of African countries that have adopted economic and political reforms. The majority of African countries have embarked on and are pursuing economic structural-adjustment programmes involving, among other elements, trade liberalization, investment-climate improvement and market-oriented economic policies. For Africa, the need for investment in infrastructure development is critical. The success of these policies will be greatly enhanced by improving support from the international financial institutions and the donor community.

Since 1990, more than 20 African countries have held free and fair elections. These, however, have not proved to be the panacea that some had hoped they would be. This is largely due to the prevailing economic conditions of underdevelopment. The OAU has now begun to take an unequivocal stand against military Governments or those that assume power through undemocratic and unconstitutional means. We have stated quite clearly that we can no longer tolerate such regimes. We call upon the international community to stand solidly behind us in denying legitimacy and recognition to such regimes and in our efforts to restore democracy and good governance.

It is poignantly clear, particularly in such countries as Sierra Leone and Burundi, that the newly established democracies there were thwarted militarily and thus failed to be sustainable. It is imperative that the United

Nations — and, indeed, the international community at large — should assist African countries in ensuring that democracy becomes an irreversible process. The present trends towards democratic governance and the rule of law need to be buttressed economically if African countries are to enjoy the peace dividend following the end of the cold war.

I would be remiss were I not to raise another matter of concern to the African continent that requires the attention of the Council and that was debated at the last summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity, namely, the need to find a solution to the dispute between Libya, the United States of America and the United Kingdom over the Lockerbie tragedy. In addition to the families of those who lost their lives, many other innocent third persons continue to suffer as a result of the sanctions imposed on Libya. Now that Libya has agreed that the two accused Libyans can be tried under Scottish law, by Scottish judges but in a third country or at the International Court of Justice, we feel that this offer should receive your serious consideration so that matters can move forward. The Organization of African Unity stands ready to assist in trying to break the present impasse.

Today's initiative must spur us to improve on previous United Nations initiatives on Africa, initiatives which foundered and collapsed for lack of requisite resources for their implementation. These include the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, the precursor of the present United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, the United Nations System-Wide Special Initiative for Africa and the Alliance for Africa's Industrialization of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), none of which can be cited as an example of success. Because Africa's economic and social conditions remain desperate, particularly in the 33 countries classified by the United Nations as least developed, there is need to develop realistic programmes that yield tangible results. At the 66th meeting of the OAU Council of Ministers, held at Harare in May of this year, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa reviewed Africa's economic predicament and confronted us with the grim statistics of an increasingly bleak African reality, in spite of the positive economic growth rates that most African countries have begun to register.

Out of sub-Saharan Africa's approximate population of over 500 million people, about 262 million, he said, live on less than $1 a day; 290 million are illiterate; 200 million are without access to health services, while 274 million have no access to safe water. Clearly, we are not talking of poverty merely as a case of relative social deprivation. This is absolute poverty.

The credibility of international cooperation is obviously at stake in the face of such damning and distressing statistics. Similarly, the international community's assertions of true partnership with Africa in the face of failing official development assistance and impossible debt repayments — to mention just two major constraints — may soon sound hollow unless that partnership manifests itself in concrete programmes of action. Debt relief is therefore urgently called for.

At the level of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, Africa has defined its priorities as the establishment of the African Economic Community by way of regional and subregional integration; the maintenance of conditions of peace and stability; human resources development; eradication of poverty; promotion of human rights; improvement of the condition of women and children; consolidation of democracy; and good governance. Often in the past, Africa had been dictated to and never had the opportunity to define its own priorities. We would want our partners to become committed to a new partnership based on sovereign equality and mutual benefit.

In conclusion, I wish to state that what Africa is asking for is not charity, but a new partnership which is mutually beneficial. We see today a growing worldwide interest in investing in and trading with Africa. We welcome and encourage that disposition. As the frontiers of peace, democracy and stability broaden on the African continent, a favourable environment for secure and lucrative investments will undoubtedly grow.

Africa seeks to be an integral part of the emerging international economic environment and stands ready to play its part in addressing the global challenges of the future. It is in light of this important need that, on behalf of the Organization of African Unity as well as on behalf of Zimbabwe, I wish once again to express my gratitude and appreciation for the convening of this special ministerial meeting of the Security Council aimed at launching a new partnership between the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations.

The President: I thank the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe and Current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity for his kind words addressed to me.

I call on the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan.

The Secretary-General: I welcome the decision of the Council to hold a ministerial meeting on Africa. Africa, and Africa's relations with the rest of the world, are changing. Many developments are positive. It is therefore timely and appropriate for the international community to examine carefully how best it can support and assist Africa at this time of change and of hope.

Ten years ago, many African countries were in crisis. Bloody conflicts raged in various parts of the continent. Economies stagnated. The spectre of famine, malnutrition and disease stalked several African nations.

But now Africa has turned an important corner. Africa is rediscovering stability. Investment is returning to many African countries. Millions of Africans are recovering hope for themselves and their families as reform helps bring growth to African economies.

There is a new drive to democracy in much of Africa. Multiparty elections have underpinned democratic rule in some countries; in others, the democratization process is under way. The link between the democratization process and efforts to ensure social justice and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is recognized and understood. The Swahili proverb says, "you cannot turn the wind, so turn the sail". Africans are working the winds of change blowing around our globe and they are beginning to reap the benefits.

As a result, there is a shift in perceptions. There is a new consensus that the primary responsibility for the solution of Africa's problems rests with Africans themselves, as we have heard from President Mugabe. This new realization also calls for a re-evaluation of the role of the international community in support of Africa's goals. It places responsibilities as much on the shoulders of Governments outside Africa as on African Governments. It challenges us to think precisely how best we can accompany the Africans on their path to lasting peace, stability, justice and sustainable development.

In place of interventionism, it promises a mature relationship based on mutual support and trust. In place of papers, studies and documents, it offers the prospects of targeted assistance and support based on common goals and shared analysis.

Formidable challenges remain. Despite all the advances that have been made, armed conflict, political instability and retreats from democracy are still preventing some African countries from moving forward. Too often, economic development remains fragile. In some parts of the continent, vast movements of refugees and displaced persons continue. In some African countries, political instability and conflict have worsened. Nationalism is on the rise in some countries, with cleavages between ethnic groups as they battle as much for economic as for political power. Internal conflicts are threatening the cohesion, and even the survival, of those countries.

The challenges of development are formidable. Of the 48 least-developed countries, 33 are in Africa. This year's *Human Development Report* from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) shows that of the 45 countries in the "low human development" category, 35 are in Africa. Statistics reveal that the gains of the 1960s and 1970s have been reversed in a number of African countries. There have been falls in per capita income, in the number of people with access to clean water, sanitation and health services, in school enrolment and in life expectancy. Africa is the only region of the world where, if present trends continue, poverty is expected to increase in the next century.

We have dissected and debated Africa, and studied and summarized its challenges, for decades. Now is the time for action. We — and I speak not only of this Council but of the United Nations and the international community generally — must respond promptly and effectively to Africa's call. We must do so with specific measures and clear proposals for action. This is our agenda. I, for my part, will continue to bring to the attention of the Security Council developments relating to peace and security that require timely action to prevent conflicts escalating.

After the unprecedented humanitarian crises of recent years, preventive diplomacy is not an option: It is a vital necessity. That is why I ask you to support the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in its efforts to strengthen its capacity for preventive diplomacy.

We have established a close partnership between the Organization for African Unity and the United Nations. We can build, therefore, on very firm foundations. The OAU has opted to concentrate on preventive diplomacy and peacemaking; the United Nations has experience and preeminence in peacekeeping, peace-enforcement and

peace-building. In several countries, United Nations peacekeepers are helping to ensure that armed conflict is replaced by the search for peace. Regional efforts have been important, notably in Liberia and in the Republic of the Congo. The United Nations has worked to support those efforts. I believe that there is scope for enhanced partnership between regional organizations and the United Nations in African peacekeeping.

I welcome the initiatives of interested Member States to strengthen Africa's peacekeeping capacity. With your continued moral and material support, and undertaken in consultation with the OAU, such activities are beginning to make a real difference to Africa's capacity for peacekeeping.

Peace-building embraces a wide range of activities, including rehabilitation, reconstruction, the maintenance of law and order, and good governance. But the crucial underlying need is for security in the lives of ordinary people: security in the form of access to health, education, clean water and a decent standard of living.

Security is no longer confined to preventing invasions. True security is built on a firm foundation of sustainable development. The pursuit of peace and security and the building of societies based on justice, democracy and human rights are not mutually exclusive. They are mutually supportive and reinforcing. Indeed, the goals of our Charter cannot be placed in order of priority. We have to pursue peace and security, and economic and social development, together and at the same time. Without peace, development is not possible; without development, peace is not durable.

Because the best way of ensuring peace and security in Africa is to promote sustainable development, I urge you to do all in your power to increase official development assistance to African countries. Africans and African Governments share the primary responsibility, which is to mobilize and maximize their internal resources. But, over and above the increasing flows of inward private investment, external financing, from both public and private sources, will continue to be of vital importance for years to come.

Only a comprehensive approach combining poverty eradication and growth will succeed. Growth-oriented strategies need to ensure that the results of growth are equitably distributed. To alleviate poverty in the short run, and to eradicate absolute poverty, development assistance should be directed to poor rural areas. Greater resources must be allocated to health, education, water supply and other basic infrastructure, as well as to capacity-building and job-generating activities. That is the approach of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. This is being put into effect by the United Nations operational arm and through the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa.

More assistance should be given to African countries to help create an enabling environment that will release the creative and entrepreneurial energies of their citizens, their non-governmental organizations, the private sector and society at large.

If Africa is to face the challenges of the global economy, including the need to diversify its economies, secure wider access to existing markets and develop new markets, external assistance will be needed. Legal frameworks, infrastructure, education and training, transparency in business and in government affairs all have a part to play. Technical assistance and advice in such fields can make a crucial difference.

Another urgent priority is to relieve African countries of their heavy debt service burden. The initiative of the Bretton Woods institutions for the highly-indebted poor countries is a step in the right direction. But more needs to be done.

Members of the Group of Seven have expressed support for Africa's development agenda. They have called for a new partnership involving developed and developing nations and the multilateral institutions. I welcome these initiatives. The United Nations stands ready to contribute to their speedy implementation.

We have a wealth of international instruments, agreed at the intergovernmental level, focusing on African development priorities. Development is a necessity in itself; it is also the only effective, long-term guarantee of lasting peace and security on the African continent.

Those are my views and my proposals. I stand ready to take whatever action the Council may require of me.

Africa is showing the way. Today the international community is called to action. Let us work together in response. Let us respond by producing an operational agenda with clear and specific steps which we can take.

Let us not only pledge, but also act, to work better together — with Africa, and for Africa.

The President: I call on the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, His Excellency Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim.

Mr. Salim (Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity): I wish at the outset to express my appreciation to you, Madam President, and to the members of the Security Council, for the timely initiative to convene this ministerial meeting of the Council devoted to African issues. In meeting today in quite special circumstances, the Security Council acknowledges the concerns that have been raised on the need for the international community to be more engaged in and to pay more attention to the problems confronting Africa.

Over the last years, our Continent and its peoples have been confronted with a multitude of serious problems, and in the process we have learned a lot. Today, Africa is deeply engaged in very difficult reforms, both political and socio-economic. The democratization process is taking root, and the issues of good governance, accountability, respect for human rights and the rule of law are now at the centre of preoccupations in the continent.

We strongly believe that the issues of peace, security and stability and the problems of economic development should be addressed simultaneously, as they are mutually reinforcing. We recognize that, while socio-economic development is our fundamental objective, there cannot be meaningful progress in an environment devoid of peace, security and stability. It is in that spirit that Africa is now involved in the implementation process of the Abuja Treaty on the establishment of the African Economic Community, the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, and other collective undertakings relating to human and social development endeavours.

There is no doubt that conflicts which continue to rage in some parts of our continent constitute for us a major preoccupation. Although most African States are not experiencing such an outbreak of conflicts, the fact remains that the existing conflicts have far-reaching implications for the peace, security and stability of the continent as a whole. The conflicts in Sierra Leone, the Horn of Africa, Congo (Brazzaville) and now the Comoros, as well as the tragedies in Rwanda and Liberia, stand in sad testimony to this fact.

These conflicts have caused irreparable loss, damage and destruction to our continent and peoples. They have also caused acute humanitarian tragedies. They have forced millions of our peoples into a life of exile as refugees. Furthermore, as a result of the unbearable burden created by the massive influx of refugees to countries of asylum, the environmental degradation generated and the frustrations and resentment raised among local populations, there has been a decline in the traditional African compassion and hospitality towards the refugees. This has been exacerbated by the eruption of the phenomenon of armed refugees. It is imperative to bear these factors in mind as the international community addresses refugee problems and recurring humanitarian crises. We must affirm the need for compassion and respect for humanitarian principles, including the principles of asylum and *non-refoulement*. But as we do so, we must not only strive towards the elimination of the root causes of these humanitarian crises, but also address the legitimate problems and concerns of the countries of asylum.

We should, therefore, recommit ourselves to pooling our resources and energy and working closely together in order to address the scourge of conflicts afflicting the African continent and to promote a climate of peace, security, stability and understanding. In that endeavour, we should, as President Mugabe, the current Chairman of the OAU, has just stated, also aim at finding lasting and peaceful solutions to disputes, such as the dispute between the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the United States and Great Britain over the Lockerbie issue. The Organization of African Unity has consistently expressed its concern over the continued sanctions imposed on that country, with their humanitarian consequences on the ordinary people, and has called for a fair trial of the suspects according to acceptable requirements of justice and international law. The Security Council may wish to give serious consideration to the proposals jointly presented by the OAU and the League of Arab States aimed at seeking a just and equitable solution to the crisis.

As the Security Council is holding this special session, we should draw lessons from our experiences. We should learn from the failure to anticipate and effectively to prevent the crime of genocide in Rwanda, which resulted in the decimation of hundreds of thousands of our fellow human beings. We should learn from the inability of the Security Council to respond appropriately to the call by African leaders to deal with the crisis in the eastern part of former Zaire. We should

aim at forging a new and true partnership that can enable us together to address, in a sustained manner, the acute problems facing our continent. While Africa, like any other region, has the responsibility to address its own problems as a matter of priority — and African States have clearly demonstrated their determination to do this — the United Nations cannot exonerate itself from its Charter responsibilities towards the continent.

As we meet here, I also believe that we should recommit ourselves to enhanced cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and our continent's institutions. In this respect, I suggest that due consideration should be given by the United Nations, and especially by the Security Council, to the positions of the continent as articulated by its continental Organization — the OAU — and its leaders, in view of the regional advantage they enjoy. For example, many people in Africa fail to understand why, despite the request made by the Chairman of the International Mediation Committee on the situation in the Congo, His Excellency El Hadj Omar Bongo, President of Gabon, for the deployment of a peacekeeping force, the Security Council has not to date been able to take decisive action.

With respect to the cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU, we should aim at building a new partnership, in keeping with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter and the "Agenda for Peace", on the role of the regional organizations in the maintenance of peace and international security.

I wish to seize this opportunity to reiterate our disposition, in the OAU, to continue working very closely with the Secretary-General of the United Nations towards that end. In this endeavour, we should be guided by the need to ensure complementarity and rational division of work based on comparative advantage. Such cooperation should, as a matter of urgency, focus on addressing the current outbreaks of violence and conflicts in the continent. But it should increasingly pay more attention to preventive diplomacy, preventive action and preventive deployment. We should also aim at re-orienting our cooperation towards building a joint capacity for post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building.

Finally, I wish to emphasize the importance of providing the OAU with the necessary logistic and technical assistance to enhance its capacity to respond to conflict situations. We have already initiated consultations with the United Nations in this respect, and we look forward to establishing concrete modalities for improved cooperation. However, beyond the necessary enhancement of the OAU capacity, there is also the need to support the capacity of our individual Member States and their subregional mechanisms to enable them to meet their responsibilities in conflict prevention, management and resolution. I wish, in this regard, to welcome the recent initiatives taken by some of our external partners to support Africa's capacity in peacekeeping. We see these initiatives as a demonstration of good disposition to enhance Africa's efforts at conflict prevention, management and resolution.

It is our sincere hope and expectation that the symbolic and political manifestation of interest and concern inherent in the holding of this special ministerial session of the Security Council will be followed up by a more active and committed involvement of the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole in dealing with African problems — especially those relating to peace, security, stability and development.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chile, His Excellency Mr. Jose Miguel Insulza.

Mr. Insulza (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you, Madam President, for having convened this timely and necessary debate.

Chile believes in Africa, its culture and its people. A large part of our participation in the Security Council over the past two years has been devoted to envisaging ways to help in solving the conflicts in this region.

Today's ministerial meeting has three major connotations for us.

First, it highlights the political priority that the rest of the international community is giving to the situation in Africa.

Secondly, it acknowledges the progress already made by the region in recent years — as recalled here by President Mugabe — and, in particular, the will of many of its leaders to shoulder their own responsibilities in resolving tension and instability within and among African countries.

Thirdly, this meeting symbolizes the commitment to increase and intensify international cooperation with African countries on the basis of their own social and

economic needs and their priorities in the area of peace and security.

Chile certainly has no strategic interests in Africa, and it is far from Africa geographically. But we are close together in our belief that world peace requires development, security and stability in Africa. In the United Nations we have done our utmost to ensure that this outlook prevails, from the General Assembly and the Security Council to the World Summit for Social Development, where Chile promoted and attained a special commitment in support to African development from the Heads of State.

In this Council forum, we would like to offer our views on future means of tackling the region's existing conflicts.

First, the international community, in reaching its decisions, must increasingly be guided by the common political mechanisms that the African countries have established for themselves. The Organization of African Unity's Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution; the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Liberia and recently in Sierra Leone; the Arusha process; and other subregional arrangements: these did not exist 10 years ago. This tremendous progress must be reinforced and strengthened in the future.

Secondly, the international community cannot apply general formulas for the resolution of all of Africa's conflicts. The rule must be, respect for the specific characteristics of each situation. This is not easy because we have noted that many self-styled experts in Africa are wrong quite regularly. It is the leaders and the peoples of Africa who must, in the framework of growing democracy, find solutions to their own problems.

Thirdly, there is no substitute for political leaders' personal commitment to peace. We who have had to work hard in our own countries to restore respect for human rights, democracy and equitable development know how arduous the path towards national reconciliation is. But, at the same time, we have learned that there is no peace in deeds if the idea of peace is not cherished. And it is the responsibility of the political leaders to act on this principle and to set this example for their followers.

Fourthly, humanitarian atrocities have been committed in Africa. We are not making a value judgement, because on this subject few societies that can cast the first stone, particularly in Africa, whose history of slavery and colonialism still causes us pain. Rather, we are appealing to the conscience of the continent, as well as to individual consciences, asking that these acts of violence not be repeated, that the truth be known, that justice prevail, that the human person be respected and that the United Nations and the non-governmental organizations be permitted to work under the protection of full respect for international humanitarian law. This is necessary for the very dignity of the region and the international image of its political authorities.

Our commitment to Africa looks to the future. Now, as never before, the world has before it the capacity to create wealth and increase well-being. But this new potential for humanity, which has yet to be realized, will be possible only if its benefits are shared by all. We do not want a twenty-first century of partial successes, of incomplete worlds and of people, countries or regions abandoned by the tide of history.

Chile does not want a world that includes some and excludes others. We want peace, security and development to become a reality for each individual, each family and each community. Only thus will we have a world that promotes human security as the true symbol of peace and international security. In this framework, the development and stability of Africa is a global priority for which we must all take responsibility.

The President: The next speaker is the Vice-Premier and Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, His Excellency Mr. Qian Qichen.

Mr. Qian Qichen (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Security Council's convening of this ministerial meeting on Africa during this session of the General Assembly shows that the international community attaches importance to Africa and appreciates the efforts made by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) over the years to settle regional conflicts.

The drastic changes in the international situation in the wake of the cold war once sent shock waves through Africa. In recent years the overall situation in Africa has been moving towards a relaxation of tensions. The economy is beginning to pick up; people have increasingly realized the importance of gaining strength through unity; and the economic integration process has gained momentum. With the relentless efforts of African countries, the OAU and other regional organizations, some of the hot spots or conflicts on the African

continent have been eliminated or eased. However, owing to historical reasons and various complex internal and external factors, the situation in Africa remains fluid. Particularly since the beginning of this year, local turmoil and conflicts have occurred from time to time.

Without stability, there can be no development, and without development, stability cannot last long. The international community, developed countries in particular, while concerning themselves with stability in Africa, should pay more attention to the continent's development. They should help African countries lift themselves out of poverty as soon as possible and achieve sustained economic growth.

There are more than 50 countries in Africa, accounting for about 50 per cent of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement and one third of the Member States of the United Nations. With abundant natural resources and great potential for economic development, Africa is an integral part of the world economy. There can be no world peace without stability in Africa, nor can there be prosperity in the world without the development of Africa.

While we heartily rejoice over the positive changes in Africa, we are deeply concerned about the local turmoil and conflicts that have brought economic losses and suffering to the people there, for whom we feel sympathy and concern.

We appeal to the parties concerned in those African countries caught up in civil strife to set store by the fundamental interests of their people and country and to settle their conflicts and disputes through peaceful consultation, so as to turn hostility into friendship and restore peace and tranquillity to those countries at the earliest possible date.

We hope that all ethnic groups and tribes in Africa will strengthen their solidarity and work together for peace and development in their respective countries.

We support African countries in choosing their own political system and road to development on the basis of their respective national conditions, and we oppose any external interference in the internal affairs of African countries.

We appreciate and support the efforts made by African countries, the OAU, the League of Arab States and other regional organizations in Africa to resolve regional conflicts and deal with hot spots through peaceful means.

We maintain that the international community, the United Nations included, should pay attention to the African issue; seriously consider the reasonable proposals and demands of African countries, including through the OAU, the League of Arab States and other regional organizations; support and coordinate with African countries in their efforts to safeguard regional peace and security; and fully respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of African countries in the handling of their problems. We would support the submission by Secretary-General Kofi Annan of a report on how to resolve the problems now facing Africa.

We call for the early establishment of a just and equitable new international political and economic order so as to create a good external environment for stability and sustained development in Africa and to ensure lasting peace and development there.

As a permanent member of the Security Council, China has always attached importance to Africa. It has supported African countries in their just struggle for the maintenance of national independence, State sovereignty and territorial integrity, and in their efforts for economic rejuvenation and social progress. It has stood for the settlement of differences and conflicts within Africa through peaceful consultation. We believe that African countries are fully capable of resolving their internal conflicts and disputes.

The past few years have seen visits to Africa by the Chinese President, the Premier and the Vice Premiers of the State Council, and various Ministers, including the Minister of Foreign Affairs. China and African countries have made considerable progress in their friendly relations and cooperation. In the years to come, China will continue to unswervingly support the just propositions and reasonable demands of African countries, strengthen its friendly relations and cooperation with them and make its contribution to peace, stability and development in Africa.

Africa is a promising continent. I am convinced that with their own efforts and the assistance of the international community, African countries will gradually achieve stability and a sustained economic development.

The President: I call next on the Minister for External Relations and Worship of Costa Rica, His Excellency Mr. Fernando Naranjo-Villalobos.

Mr. Naranjo-Villalobos (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is a great pleasure for my delegation to have you, Madam Secretary of State, presiding over this important ministerial meeting of the Security Council to consider the general international peace and security situation in Africa.

The Security Council devotes most of its time to the African issues on its agenda. Economic and social crises in Africa give rise to armed conflicts there. Each one of these issues — particularly the serious political and structural conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa — illustrate the extent to which the Council's concepts and working practices have changed in this post-cold-war era and the interpretation that its members give to its powers, obligations and duties under Chapters VI and VII of the Charter.

My country has stressed — in the Security Council and in various other United Nations bodies — that from the traditional concept of conflicts between States, or situations with the potential for international war, we are moving to a much more integrated and comprehensive view, one of conflicts posing threats to international peace and security. This view includes situations of extreme poverty and economic and social under-development, human rights violations, massive flows of refugees, civil wars resulting from ethnic conflicts, extreme degradation of the environment, terrorism, and even certain socio-political phenomena such as corruption, drug trafficking and international crime; it also includes religious fundamentalism, which in recent years has aggressively invaded several regions of the world. These topics are now firmly on the international security agenda.

My country wishes to highlight the way in which African countries have taken clear leadership in the resolution of their own conflicts within the context of their regional and subregional organizations. Costa Rica encourages Africa to continue in this direction in the framework of coordination with the United Nations and in accordance with the provisions of the Charter and international law.

Costa Rica considers full respect for all human rights to be of the utmost importance. The message of the Security Council in this regard should be clear and forceful: measures taken by the international community to further peace and security will be significant and enduring only if unconditional respect for human rights is required as a basis for solving conflicts.

Costa Rica believes that in no region should ideology, gender, religion, disputes over political power or conflicts of an ethnic, racial or cultural nature be used as excuses for the violation of human rights or to perpetuate impunity. To defend this position of principle is to defend the very essence of the United Nations.

Costa Rica joins in the international recognition of the African countries that have chosen a democratic system of government, the rule of law, respect for and protection of human rights and progress through economic reform as their best hopes for ending internal and regional violence and guaranteeing sustainable growth and development. It is nevertheless disheartening to see severe economic, social and political imbalances persist in that continent. These imbalances will not be eradicated without the will of Africa's leaders and the decisive support of the international community.

In my country's judgement, this support must be offered in a spirit of solidarity, unconditionally and with a greater emphasis on areas where it is needed for humanitarian reasons. However, in order to stimulate democratic consolidation and the rule of law, the international community should increase its support for and cooperation with those countries which continue to make substantial progress on all human rights, in fighting public and private corruption and in demilitarization and disarmament.

Allow me to recall some demilitarization and disarmament measures that have already been suggested by various international bodies, such as expanding the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms; prohibiting weapons exports to countries that do not declare their transfers to the United Nations and to States that have not signed the major conventions on human rights, international humanitarian law and disarmament; and banning the transfer of materials and personnel or logistical and financial support to States where it has been shown that their military or security forces have participated in or contributed to the violation of human rights.

Costa Rica believes that countries which produce and deal in arms should be urged to exercise effective control of their exports to Africa. The international community has justifiably demanded, as part of a concerted strategy, that drug-producing countries put an

end to that scourge by destroying it at its roots, thereby helping to diminish its impact on consumer countries. Is it not equally a moral imperative to call upon the weapons producers and dealers who every year cut down or irreparably damage the lives of tens of thousands of innocent Africans to exercise similar restraints so that that shall occur no more?

Many of the recommendations in the report which the Secretary-General will present to us in February 1998 will exceed the powers of the Security Council. The report will therefore also have to go to the General Assembly and other bodies of the United Nations system, as well as to private humanitarian organizations. Only thus, with an integral and comprehensive perspective, will it be possible to establish an effective strategy for the international community's support for the peoples and nations of Africa.

After the armed conflicts, we cannot simply require limitless adjustment, reform and liberalization from the countries of this enormous continent. If the world really desires the consolidation of peace in Africa, a broad and deep programme of social and economic reconstruction will be needed. Such a programme requires the backing of the international community, the valuable contributions of non-governmental organizations and the appropriate context for firm and lasting peace.

Democracy in the hands of civil authorities will flourish and acquire its true meaning only where there is economic justice and social peace. Building these fundamental conditions and developing the state of law as the basis for democratic order and national reconciliation is the greatest challenge Africa will confront in the next century.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt, His Excellency Mr. Amre Moussa.

Mr. Moussa (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I was extremely happy during the last few days to be among those who welcomed you, Madam President, during your first trip to the Middle East. Your visit succeeded in introducing a distinguished personality who is deeply appreciated, and it raised hopes for a balanced policy and an active co-sponsorship of the peace process.

As the Security Council meets today at your initiative to consider the situation in Africa, it gives me pleasure, on behalf of Egypt as an African country, to express our support for this initiative, both in its content and its timing. The participation of His Excellency President Robert Mugabe, the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), is a clear testimony to the importance our continent attaches to this initiative.

We take this initiative as a call to the international community to reaffirm its determination to promote common action in support of the African countries at this historic juncture. Such support is necessary for Africa to undertake its role as a full partner in laying down the foundations of the new international order in all its various structural, political, security and economic aspects.

Africa now needs to address three main requirements: first, the striving for the peaceful settlement of conflicts occurring in a number of its regions, as well as for urgent solutions to the problems of refugees; secondly, the achievement of economic and social development and the enhancement of integration, both at the level of the continent as a whole and on the level of subregional groupings; and thirdly, the turn to democratization and to the respect for human rights by African communities.

We in Africa have already taken serious steps towards the fulfilment of these requirements. As for the first challenge, the establishment in 1993 of the African Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution was an affirmation of Africa's willingness to shoulder its responsibilities in finding peaceful solutions to these conflicts and in containing them before they escalate. Moreover, the last few years have also witnessed an effective contribution by African subregional groupings in this respect. Indeed, African efforts frequently preceded international endeavours in addressing crises in that continent and their containment and solution. Africa has also taken another important step by establishing an African nuclear-weapon-free zone and adopting the Cairo Declaration, which expressed the hope that this step would be followed by similar measures in other regions of the world, foremost among which is the Middle East, whose security is closely linked to that of Africa.

These developments make it more imperative than ever before that the international community enhance the role of the Organization of African Unity and provide it with the necessary political support and the required material and technical capabilities to improve its capabilities to contribute to the resolution of problems and conflicts within an African framework. This should encompass fostering the cooperation between the United

Nations and the Organization of African Unity and the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report on improving preparedness for conflict prevention and peacekeeping in Africa, which was presented at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly in November 1995. The Secretary-General's report articulated how to attain this goal through measures designed to increase coordination and the exchange of information between the two organizations. This is in addition to the promotion of joint United Nations/OAU approach in addressing those crises.

The Secretary-General's report concluded that the success of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building in Africa, regardless of the level of preparedness and effective cooperation between the two organizations, depends on the existence of a political will of the parties to the conflict, as well as of the Member States, particularly members of the Security Council, to support peacekeeping operations and to make available the human, material and financial resources needed to discharge their mandates from inception. On this basis alone, the mechanisms for the resolution and management of conflicts could be effective in the post-cold-war era.

I should like also to recall the report presented by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at this session on cooperation between the United Nations and the regional organizations in the field of preventive diplomacy and peaceful conflict resolution. In that report the Secretary-General cited the example of close cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, paying tribute to the nearly daily contacts between the United Nations and the OAU, as well as to the appointment of a Special Representative for the Secretaries-General of both organizations for the situation in the Great Lakes region.

We welcomed the initiative of the United States, France and the United Kingdom to strengthen Africa's peacekeeping capabilities. Yet we believe that such an endeavour should take place in full cooperation with the Organization of African Unity and its conflict resolution mechanism. It should also take place in full conformity with the United Nations mandate in connection with peacekeeping operations. A joint mechanism should be created to direct these efforts with a view to benefiting the African countries in finding solutions to their crises.

While I am confident that we all agree on the need for Africa to assume a greater role in dealing with its own security problems, the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security still lies with the international community, as represented by the Security Council. What is needed now is a partnership that enhances African capabilities in the field of conflict prevention and peacemaking within African territories. This would enable Africa to participate, together with the United Nations, in shaping a stable world order, especially with regard to addressing the root causes of crises, to anticipation and prevention of conflicts, and to focusing on development efforts.

As for the second challenge relating to the achievement of economic and social development, despite the difficulties which African States face in connection with their commitment to economic reform and restructuring programmes, the African States have been keen on implementing these programmes seriously and successfully, as was recognized by the relevant international institutions, and this has led to a perceptible improvement in the rate of growth.

Notwithstanding these positive indications, the continent as a whole is still suffering from an increasing external debt burden, receding standards of living, low-level social services and health care for its citizens and a diminishing capability to compete and to attract foreign investments. All these elements are impediments to the process of development, combined with the waste of human and economic resources as a result of the continued instability and conflicts in certain areas.

Since we in Africa realize the importance of these variables, and keeping in mind the adverse impact of the absence of effective economic integration in Africa, we have taken a number of steps to establish the African Economic Community and to revitalize the subregional groupings that are the pillars of that Community. Such steps include removing trade barriers and facilitating the movement of capital and persons, along with creating a better climate, one conducive to attracting foreign investments, improving the infrastructure and enhancing the role of the private sector in the economy.

Needless to say, these regional efforts require a favourable international environment so they can yield good results. Foreign assistance — while we recognize its necessity and benefits — is still insufficient. The implementation of concrete programmes of action adopted by the General Assembly on more than one occasion did not live up to expectations. Some of these programmes

and resolutions remain locked up in the archives and have never been implemented.

Our need for new initiatives for Africa is far less than our need for the creation of mechanisms to energize and coordinate the existing initiatives, be they, as the Secretary-General reaffirmed in his statement today, United Nations or donor-country initiatives, the most recent of which was that of last June's Denver Summit. What really counts is to make available the resources required to speed up the implementation of these initiatives. What we need here is to strive to meet the urgent needs of African States and in particular to deal with and mitigate the burden of external debt, to enhance foreign direct investments and to open markets for African exports.

As for support for democracy and respect for human rights in Africa, which is the third point I referred to at the beginning of my statement, Africa is committed to this approach. It is a serious commitment which has been reaffirmed in the declaration adopted in 1990 by the Heads of State and Government of Africa and has been emphasized by the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights which has already been adopted. Furthermore, the elaboration of a protocol for establishing an African court to consider human rights violations is about to be finalized. This is in addition to the elections that have been organized in a number of African countries, co-observed at the request of the African countries concerned, and recognized as fair by the United Nations and several other international organizations.

Among the strongest indications of African adherence to legality and its refusal to depart from it is the continent's firm and collective position vis-à-vis the developments in Sierra Leone and before that in Liberia, our collective endeavours regarding the situation in Angola or in Congo (Brazzaville), as well as the active follow-up to the events unfolding in Somalia and the Great Lakes region, together with the measures taken regarding the developments in each of them.

Having said that, we should not overlook the difficult circumstances facing our African societies. Upholding democracy requires a secure climate free from the sufferings of poverty, hunger and war, as well as satisfaction of basic needs to ensure a decent life for people.

Africa needs support in its political, economic and social reform process. It is keen to benefit from the experience of others, taking into account that no uniform approaches could be imposed in this regard in view of the special circumstances, beliefs and stage of development of every society.

Africa also seeks democracy at the international level. Hence our collective African position in support of the process of reforming the United Nations and restructuring the Security Council and the attainment of a more just representation of all regions, including Africa, in terms of both the permanent and non-permanent seats in the Council. This position has been underlined in the declaration which was adopted at the African summit held in Harare in June, and it is a position that we support and uphold.

In conclusion, I would also like to refer to another issue which is of concern to the Security Council and the African community, as it involves an African country and an African people, namely the issue of Libya and Lockerbie. Every aspect of this issue is well-known and the African position regarding it is quite clear, as was stated by President Mugabe, Chairman of the OAU. While we all stress the importance of respecting the rules of international law and Security Council resolutions and the commitments which guarantee that justice is upheld and that the suspects are given a fair trial, I recall, in this respect, the initiative unanimously supported by member States of the OAU and the options put forward for consideration and possible adoption to put an end to the current problem.

Justice has to be done for the families of the victims. Let us consider how to facilitate bringing the suspects to trial as soon as possible so as to preserve respect for the legitimacy of the Security Council, to reach an agreeable solution for all parties to this problem, and to alleviate the suffering of the Libyan people and the families of the victims.

We call for the enhancement of the role of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in support of Africa. Here, we agree with what was stated by the Secretary-General. Our continent should be enabled to take its rightful place in the international community that has been denied to it because of certain historical factors well known to all of us. What we have to strive for is the establishment of an effective partnership between Africa and the United Nations in the interests of peace and development.

The President: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt for his kind words addressed to me.

I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, His Excellency Mr. Hubert Védrine.

Mr. Védrine (France) (*interpretation from French*): Our Council has regularly convened to discuss Africa, but all too often we are urgently looking for solutions to crises. So it is an excellent idea to have a substantive debate on the problems of peace and development on the African continent. No other international body can do so with the same legitimacy or with the same responsibilities.

First of all, which Africa are we discussing?

Since 1995, the African continent has seen renewed growth, higher than its rate of demographic expansion, yet that growth is unevenly distributed. Some States have been able to take advantage of favourable economic conditions by moving towards both democratization and bold economic reforms at the same time. But for a good many countries, growth is still not in the cards, and the regional context is particularly important.

Furthermore, while Africa as a whole is enjoying renewed growth, sub-Saharan Africa's overall share of world trade has fallen steadily for the past 25 years, to the point that it now accounts for only 1.5 per cent. This highlights how difficult it is for Africa to fall in with the current process of globalization.

The debt burden, in spite of repeated programmes to cancel or reschedule debt, is still a major handicap for Africa at a time when it is looking for ways to achieve a new dynamism.

Added to these serious constraints is the trend towards reducing official development assistance. With the end of the cold war, part of the aid that Africa enjoyed has been directed elsewhere. Above all, certain major countries have drastically slashed their development aid budgets. In some cases, the reduction was more than 30 per cent in 1995 and 1996 alone.

The aid cutbacks came just when Africa was engaged in courageous structural adjustment processes. African Governments thus found they had less external financing just as they were making great demands on their populations.

Continuing the reduction of international aid flows, I want to emphasize here, would raise the spectre of increased tension and further crises in Africa. We drew the attention of our European partners to this in 1995 in connection with the replenishment of the European Development Fund, and we pleaded this cause at the G-7 Summit in Lyon in 1996. This has been a French commitment for decades, and for a long time France was alone in recalling this issue. It will continue to do so.

This is the background we must bear in mind when we address questions of security in Africa even if, in each crisis, local and subregional political factors, often ethnic factors, also play a leading role.

The tragedies in some countries these past few years have produced tremendous human suffering and massive displacements of civilians to countries that are themselves beset by serious problems. These streams of refugees have destabilized entire regions, in spite of the remarkable efforts made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

These populations, sometimes held hostage by armed groups bent on genocide — for which an international criminal court has been set up — have in turn been massacred in circumstances that need to be brought to light so that a different future can be forged.

Signs of hope are beginning to appear. First of all, for several years Africa has daily offered growing proof of its determination to work actively towards preventing and settling the conflicts it faces. The Organization of African Unity is playing an increasing and positive role in many sensitive situations. For the first time, in the course of the last 12 months, the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity appointed a joint Special Representative in the Great Lakes region in the person of Ambassador Sahnoun. France welcomes the closer ties between the two organizations. I wish to add that I approve what the Secretary-General of the OAU said concerning the appeal made by President Bongo with regard to the Republic of the Congo.

Some subregional organizations, in southern African, West Africa and the Horn of Africa, are asserting their strengths and are already a stabilizing factor that should be encouraged. Preventive diplomacy by heads of State is making a useful contribution to solving many disputes.

In certain situations, Africa, despite limited means, has taken the initiative in peacekeeping operations. In this respect, the action taken by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group

(ECOMOG) in Liberia was a positive experience. The mission to monitor the Bangui Agreements in the Central African Republic is proving to be a success for the African countries that comprise it. The Security Council recognized that success recently by approving the continuation of those operations.

This positive development should be encouraged. But, because we believe that this encouragement should not be limited merely to words, mechanisms must be put in place to enable the international community as a whole to coordinate its assistance to African States and organizations so as to strengthen their peacekeeping capabilities. In this spirit France, the United Kingdom and the United States recently agreed to cooperate to strengthen the peacekeeping capabilities of the African countries under the auspices of the United Nations and in liaison with the OAU.

But helping Africa to become more involved in the resolution of its crises does not in any way, in our view, mean that the international community should relinquish its responsibilities with regard to the African continent. On the contrary, it must become involved by going beyond declarations of intent, and intervene effectively in crisis situations as soon as conditions allow for an effective presence.

For its part, France, conscious of its special responsibilities as a permanent member of the Security Council, and aware of the importance of respect for Security Council decisions, is working tirelessly to help prevent crises, increasingly favouring a multilateral approach to questions of security on the African continent. While maintaining the defence agreements linking it to certain countries, France has signalled its refusal to be drawn into internal conflicts or to interfere in the internal affairs of its African partners.

My country has clearly chosen its policy: support for the building of democratic States based on the rule of law, support for good governance, support for development — the key to stability and peace in Africa — and the construction of a partnership that looks to the future. It shares this policy with the other members of the European Union, which, through the European Development Fund, the Lomé Convention and bilateral assistance, is by far the African continent's principal partner. France is adopting and modernizing its African policy to take account of present-day realities, but it will not disengage. On the contrary, it will continue to uphold this policy while working alongside you, Madam President, the Secretary-General and the Ministers present today.

The President: I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Guinea-Bissau, His Excellency Mr. Delfim da Silva.

Mr. Da Silva (Guinea-Bissau) (*spoke in Portuguese; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation*): There can be no question but that Africa has witnessed far-reaching changes in the past six years. These changes of a political, economic and social nature have been greatly inspired and conditioned, if not caused, by major global transformations as we approach the end of the century, and reflect the acknowledgement by African Governments of the aspiration of their peoples to greater freedom and democracy and respect for their basic rights within the context of a multiplicity of ideas and equality of opportunity. In many cases, they are the outcome of an electoral process, sometimes conducted under the supervision of the United Nations and other international observers. But the upheavals we are seeing in Africa are also, unfortunately, a tragic and uncontrollable consequence of the refusal of some African leaders to hear the cries of distress of their people or to comply with the rules and norms of democracy and good governance that the people are demanding, sometimes through violent protest and even through armed struggle.

No African people today will submit to being ignored or living under a dictatorial regime. African societies need more room to express themselves so as to participate more effectively in the conduct and management of national affairs — matters that are of direct concern to them. The holding of free and democratic elections in many countries reflects the awareness of this new reality by African statesmen. But the electoral process alone is not enough. There must also be an opportunity for every citizen to prosper and benefit from improved standards of living equitably shared.

While it is true that from now on democracy and political pluralism will be part of the political vocabulary in Africa, as in the rest of the world, principles no less important than tolerance, the right to dissent and respect for the individual are not yet firmly embedded in the hearts and minds of all the men and women in our continent. Africa is suffering from many ills. It is still faced with afflictions which, given their seriousness and intensity, warrant all the support that is so sorely needed.

That is why we are so pleased, Madam President, that your country, the United States of America, took the initiative in organizing a ministerial meeting of Security

Council members devoted to Africa. This is also an eloquent expression of the interest that the Security Council takes in Africa, and a token of friendship and solidarity with the peoples whom we represent. The presence of President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, and of Mr. Salim Salim, its Secretary-General, whose statements cannot fail to inspire and contribute to our collective endeavour, give our discussions an exceptional character. I also pay tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his tireless efforts to find solutions to the problems of Africa.

Africa is constantly to the fore on the international scene in a way that is increasingly worrying. Revolt, inter-ethnic and inter-State conflict, tribal war, *coup d'état*, massive displacement of populations and concentrations of refugees unfortunately constitute the heavy burden carried today by certain peoples in Africa. Why? That is the question asked by so many men, women and children, including many old people who no longer have the strength to walk, human beings who are hunted down like animals, having to wander in the forests in mortal danger. Why is there such unhappiness and desolation? Why are all these atrocities and killings taking place? We have the duty to seek out together the reasons for all these calamities, and to propose solutions.

The Security Council, and the international community as a whole, should try to identify the true causes of all the conflicts besetting many African countries and impeding the social and economic progress of their peoples. We know, of course, that the United Nations cannot do everything, but we maintain the conviction that together we can undertake to do more and with greater success. We have seen what can be done elsewhere, and quickly, in similar circumstances. Let us try to put equal value on the life of every human being throughout the world. Suffering in Africa should not be viewed as inevitable. What are the resources available to us? We have, of course, the Security Council, whose primary responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security. We are a part of it, we debate within it to find solutions that are, whenever possible, the results of consensus. However, notwithstanding the good intentions and eloquence with which decisions are announced, it sometimes seems that we do not have a clear enough idea of the seriousness of certain crises and that, as a result, we do not act with the necessary speed and urgency. In this connection, the case of Congo (Brazzaville) is conspicuous and calls for thoughtful reflection.

The United Nations Charter confers upon the Security Council the power and the responsibility to take coercive measures to enforce respect for its decisions. Those measures, whose effects in humanitarian terms can cause harm to innocent populations, should have time limits and should be periodically reviewed on the basis of objective data. We believe that, in the light of recent developments, the case of Libya deserves reconsideration. I have in mind, in particular, the joint proposals by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the League of Arab States, which provide for machinery to ensure that the rights of victims are respected and that justice is done in accordance with universally accepted norms.

We understand that it is up to the African Governments, first and foremost, to ensure respect for their citizens' basic rights and to promote democracy and good governance so as to create conditions for genuine progress and prosperity for all. African countries should cultivate tolerance and respect for others, and they should foster a sense of belonging, regardless of ethnic group, to the same nation. Even if our countries today have embraced democracy, that democracy, to be viable, must in the long term be realized by taking into account the specific cultural characteristics of each one of us. Democracy is a complex and lengthy process which, while principally dependent on the effort of individual peoples, must have a foundation of international assistance if it is to take shape and bear fruit.

Many conflicts in Africa are the direct result of a lack of a state of law and of viable economic structures. The effort of the international community should be aimed at encouraging the emergence of pluralist political forces supported by a civil society that is aware of its basic rights and on a private sector that is both dynamic and entrepreneurial. Where inter-ethnic conflicts exist, we should ensure respect for the rights of the individual and promote a culture of peace rooted in the diversity and wealth of a country's ethnic groups.

What can we expect from today's meeting? First, we can expect a confirmation of the view shared by members of the Security Council with regard to the seriousness of the conflicts that currently exist in Africa and that are causing such distress and taking such a toll on the populations concerned. We must be innovative and create the machinery needed to increase the capacity of African countries to help in the settlement of conflicts in their region. I have in mind, in particular, the initiative taken by the United States, France and the United Kingdom to help Africans in this regard, a most timely

initiative that deserves our appreciation and the support of the whole of the international community. Above all, however, we must give Africans the means to prevent conflicts by supporting the efforts of the OAU and subregional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), whose contribution to the settlement of the conflict in Liberia is recognized by all. We should work with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to ensure the protection of refugees and their voluntary return to their country of origin. Lastly, we must ensure respect for the rights of the individual and help African countries create conditions that will lead to economic progress by undertaking the economic reforms that are necessary for the development and well-being of their peoples.

The importance of a Security Council meeting devoted to Africa explains the presence in this Chamber of many African colleagues who would have liked to take an active part in our discussions. Our present deliberations are, in fact, the first stage in an effort towards collective deliberation. It is therefore important that the dialogue be pursued and that account be taken of the opinion of the countries directly concerned in formulating a series of measures designed to contribute to the settlement of conflicts in Africa. It is our wish that the hopes raised throughout Africa by our debate — in Angola, in Burundi, in the Central African Republic, in Liberia, in Rwanda, in Sierra Leone, in Somalia, in the Republic of the Congo and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo — not be disappointed.

The President: The next speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, His Excellency Mr. Keizo Obuchi. I invite him to make his statement.

Mr. Obuchi (Japan)(*spoke in Japanese; interpretation by the delegation*): At the outset, I should like to pay tribute to Her Excellency Madam Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State of the United States, for having taken the initiative to convene a formal ministerial-level meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Africa. I believe it is extremely important for the Security Council to reaffirm in today's ministerial-level meeting its commitment to Africa.

The many and intense conflicts now occurring in Africa pose the greatest challenge to peace and security, not only for the African region but for the entire international community as well. Indeed, it may be said that our success in resolving the African problem will be a test of the effectiveness of the Security Council as the principal organ of the United Nations with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Many of the conflicts afflicting Africa in recent years, stemming from various societal factors — including the failure of good governance, the collapse of civil society and the persistence of tribal rivalries — are very different from the many regional conflicts we witnessed during the cold-war era.

Against the backdrop of the proliferation of these conflicts, which are destroying the entire fabric of society in many parts of Africa, there is a growing sense of frustration and despair that the United Nations, and especially its Security Council, have not always been able to respond to them effectively. Japan believes that the Security Council, which is entrusted with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, should involve itself more proactively in playing its role and assisting in the endeavours of the African countries to prevent and resolve these conflicts. It is precisely in this context that the reform of the Security Council, aimed at making this organ more legitimate and effective so that it might deal effectively with these conflicts in Africa, is so urgent at this moment.

In dealing with these conflicts, which in many cases have their root causes in the indigenous societal conditions of the country involved, it is essential that the Security Council seek close cooperative relations with regional and subregional organizations, such as the Organization of African Unity and the Economic Community of West African States. It is with this in mind that Japan, in January of next year, will convene in Tokyo the International Conference on Preventive Strategy, focusing in particular on Africa. I earnestly hope that, building on the results of today's meeting, concrete recommendations may come out of the Conference for strengthening such cooperative relationships as well.

In thinking about the problem of conflict prevention and resolution in Africa, we cannot emphasize too strongly the importance of humanitarian assistance for refugees, displaced persons and others in the context of conflicts. Japan wishes to take this opportunity to express its deep appreciation for the efforts that international humanitarian agencies, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the International Committee of the Red Cross and others have been making. Japan believes that the Security Council should seek to further

develop its cooperative relations with these and other organizations. In this context, I wish to renew the appeal which Japan has been making that the parties involved fully respect the principles of international humanitarian law and make their utmost efforts to ensure the safety of all personnel engaged in humanitarian activities.

Japan believes that, in coping with these African conflicts, it is crucial to deal squarely with the issue of development as well as to address the conflicts themselves. I say this in the belief that peace and development are two sides of the same coin — without development the causes of conflict will not be eliminated and without peace the conditions for development will not be met. Therefore, with a view to contributing to international peace by tackling development issues in close cooperation with the United Nations, Japan has been taking the initiative for a new development strategy, which is to be based on the firm recognition of ownership of the countries involved, as well as a genuine partnership between them and industrialized countries.

This is a comprehensive strategy to be carried out by donor countries, including Japan, developing countries, the United Nations, the World Bank and all other partners in development issues. It seeks to achieve development through an organic combination of official development assistance, trade, human resources development and other means. Japan seeks the active support and cooperation of all concerned in giving this strategy concrete form.

To this purpose, Japan will co-organize in the autumn of 1998, together with the United Nations and the Global Coalition for Africa, the second Tokyo International Conference on African Development, in which the participation of all the African countries is anticipated at the ministerial level. The Conference will explore concrete ways in which the new development strategy can be applied to Africa. Japan seeks the cooperation of all countries concerned towards the success of the Conference, so that substantive progress can be made in the promotion of African development. This, in turn, will contribute to conflict prevention.

The achievement of African stability will be essential to the promotion of prosperity founded on peace and stability in the international community as a whole in the twenty-first century. In view of the relevance of economic and social development in meeting the challenges of African conflicts, the Security Council should give more thought and attention than it has done in the past to the intrinsic relationship that exists between conflict resolution and development. The Council should also broaden its perspective on the problem of conflict prevention and resolution by exploring a comprehensive approach to the conflicts in Africa in which we can address issues relating to humanitarian assistance as well as post-conflict reconstruction.

That this will require greater cooperation between the Security Council and other organs is self-evident. Japan hopes that, on the basis of this understanding of the issue, the Secretary-General will study concrete ways and means for the resolution of conflicts in Africa and make a report to the Security Council containing concrete proposals at an early date. Based on those proposals, Japan will actively explore concrete ways to contribute to conflict resolution.

If it is deemed appropriate, Japan hopes to contemplate, subject to the concurrence of the other members of the Council, a further opportunity for the Security Council to address this issue as it assumes the presidency in the first half of next year, taking into account the outcome of the International Conference on Preventive Strategy that Japan is organizing in January.

The President: I wonder if I might at this moment express condolences, on behalf of the whole Council, to the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, whose wife died last night. He has returned home. On behalf of us all, I express our condolences to Mr. Alhaj Abdus Samad Azad.

I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation of Kenya, His Excellency The Honourable Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka.

Mr. Musyoka (Kenya): My delegation and I regard this special meeting of the Security Council on Africa as opportune and merited, because African issues constitute 65 per cent of the current work of the Security Council. I take this opportunity to express our gratitude to you, Madam President, for initiating this very useful idea.

The situation in Africa today is characterized by political conflicts, on the one hand, and serious economic problems, on the other. These two problems invariably affect each other and a comprehensive and integrated approach must be found to resolve the situation. There can be no development without peace. Indeed, the experience of my country in peacemaking efforts in our region clearly reflects this understanding. Africa's problems will be overcome through the determination and

resilience of the peoples of the continent themselves with the support of the international community and, in particular, the United Nations.

The scourge of conflicts in Africa constitutes perhaps the most urgent socio-political problem facing the continent. Over the last three decades, Africa has witnessed no less than 20 full-fledged conflicts, which have generated immeasurable suffering. Some of these conflicts have been resolved, while others remain intractable. Yet others are emerging that need our urgent attention to contain, such as the current one in the Republic of Congo. African Governments have recognized the dangers of these conflicts and are making efforts to resolve them. Towards this end, they have taken collective measures in the search for solutions to the conflicts and, in so doing, they recognize the important role that the international community must play in this difficult task.

In 1990, the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) adopted the Declaration on the Political and Socio-Economic Situation in Africa and the Fundamental Changes Taking Place in the World. By this Declaration, the leaders recognized the need to reform their political systems for the benefit of their people and committed their countries to further democratization. Since then, many countries have abandoned military and authoritarian regimes and are now holding free and fair elections.

In 1993, the African Heads of State and Government established the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution to deal with conflicts on the continent. Today, there are many regional initiatives that are under way to try and resolve some of these conflicts.

In our subregion, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has been actively involved in conflict-resolution, particularly in the Sudan and in Somalia. In the Sudan, under the chairmanship of His Excellency President Daniel Toroitich arap Moi, the negotiation process, which had been quiet, was re-energized at a meeting held on 16 September 1997 in Nairobi, during which agreement was reached on a date for the resumed meeting, which is scheduled for 28 October this year. For this process to be successful, the parties to the conflict in the Sudan must have the courage and political will to negotiate in good faith. Equally important is the active support of the international community, which must come in the form of financial resources to sustain the process and of pressure on all the parties. We must not be seen to be encouraging a proliferation of efforts, but must continue to build on the positive achievements made so far.

The involvement of IGAD in Somalia, under the chairmanship of Ethiopia, has produced encouraging results, which have received support from organizations and countries alike. We in the subregion look to the Bossaso conference scheduled for November 1997 for additional impetus for the process of national reconciliation and reconstruction in Somalia.

In our view, the success in Liberia is an example where African efforts have achieved some measure of success, thanks to the support and cooperation of the international community. Africa will continue to rely on the support of the Security Council, which has the primary responsibility in matters of international peace and security. It must be seen to be playing the leading role assigned to it in resolving conflicts the world over. We would like to see the Security Council adopt the same standard of urgency in reacting to conflicts in Africa as it does in other parts of the world.

The socio-economic situation in Africa has remained precarious for many years, despite the many efforts made by African countries to improve their people's lives. Many African countries appear on the list of the world's poorest nations. Africa remains marginalized in current international economic relations. A host of factors has for many decades been responsible. These include low-level commodity prices, a heavy debt burden, unequal trading relations, declining resource transfers, and unpredictable and conditional relations with the international financial system. As a result, the situation in Africa is characterized by generalized poverty and underdevelopment by all indicators. Per-capita incomes are the lowest in the world and they continue to fall year by year. The rate of development has stagnated and has in some cases been negative. Today, Africa is the only continent that is unable to feed its rising population without support from outside.

Despite these problems, African countries are making serious efforts to lay a solid foundation for their development. At the regional level, a treaty for the economic integration of African economies has entered into force, and the integration process is underway. At the same time, many Governments are in the final stages of implementing far-reaching economic reforms. These worthy efforts require the support of the international community.

Urgent and comprehensive action by the international community must be taken to address the serious socio-economic issues affecting Africa. There is a need to redefine Africa's relationship with the key players in the current economic world order, including the Bretton Woods institutions, which should re-examine their policies on Africa.

Kenya reiterates the importance of the United Nations as the central forum for dialogue and negotiations in matters of international peace and security, as well as for cooperation towards economic and social development. We attach high political importance to the strengthening of the United Nations with a view to enhancing its effectiveness in international affairs.

The relevance of the implementation of important decisions previously taken at United Nations conferences cannot be overemphasized. We are concerned at the lack of compliance by developed countries with commitments previously made. At the same time, any attempts to implement the outcome of those commitments selectively or outside the framework within which they were agreed should be avoided.

Kenya attaches considerable importance to the cooperation that exists between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. We think that this cooperation could be enhanced for the benefit of Africa. A re-examination needs to be made of the resolutions that the General Assembly adopts every year on cooperation between the two organizations, with a view to improving their implementation. Resolutions of the OAU on African issues need to be respected by the Security Council. In this connection, Kenya associates itself with the statement made by His Excellency President Robert G. Mugabe in his capacity as the current Chairman of the OAU.

In conclusion, it is my delegation's hope that when the Secretary-General makes his report on the situation in Africa, these and other issues will be addressed. Similarly, it is our hope that his proposals will herald a new era in which important decisions on Africa are taken seriously and implemented fully. We look forward to that report.

The President: I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland, His Excellency Mr. Dariusz Rosati.

Mr. Rosati (Poland): At the outset, Madam, let me say how glad I am to see you presiding over the present ministerial meeting of the Security Council. I would like to express my deep satisfaction at your initiative to convene this meeting. The Polish delegation immediately lent its support to the United States proposal in this respect, regarding it as highly advisable and timely.

The precarious security situation and persistent lack of stability in many areas of Africa remain a source of deep concern for us. The complex nature of African conflicts reduces the effectiveness of the measures applied by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in their efforts to resolve them. Essentially a product of deep social and economic underdevelopment, crises in that part of the world are aggravated by ethnic, cultural and religious factors, all deeply rooted in history. They often involve total disruption in the functioning of State organs, especially in areas affected by military hostilities. They are also frequently accompanied by massive displacements of populations, which additionally worsen the humanitarian situation in a region, generating further violations of human rights.

The unique character of African crises calls for the development of an overall concept of international assistance that would address their underlying causes in all their complexity. Hence, it is important that the recommendations to be submitted by the Secretary-General aimed at devising a feasible plan to terminate civil wars in Africa should be based on a precise identification of their sources. They should also include a specific outline of modes of international assistance for the comprehensive reconstruction and rehabilitation of the destroyed administrative, economic and social infrastructure of countries affected by conflicts.

All this, however, indispensable as it is, would only be one step on the long path to normality in many war-torn places in Africa. What is needed first and foremost is a vision of that normality. This vision should be worked out primarily by the peoples of Africa themselves. We believe that in thinking about the African future they would be well advised to build on well-tested solutions, enriched with their specific local experience and African traditions, bearing in mind that respect for universally recognized standards of democracy, the rule of law and basic human rights lies at the centre of contemporary international relations.

My Government welcomes the ongoing efforts to develop cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. We note with appreciation the significant achievements in this area and we encourage the continuation of this bold approach, which

already this year has brought a significant enrichment of that cooperation in both substance and form.

Regional and subregional efforts aimed at defusing tensions and terminating conflicts in Africa are indispensable in the search for a peaceful future for that continent. Regional actors are uniquely placed to provide countries and nations in trouble with appropriate and timely advice and assistance. In this context, the tireless efforts of African mediators in regional conflicts deserve our deepest respect.

The peacekeeping capacity of African countries is, in our view, one of the most important aspects of the regional potential to deal with conflicts, and it should be comprehensively developed. Over the last few years we have been witnessing an enormous step forward in expanding the theory and practice of peacekeeping in Africa.

By way of example, I wish to refer in this context only to the efforts to assist this process undertaken by the Western European Union. Poland believes that more use should be made of thorough observations contained in documents relating to African peacekeeping forces submitted to the Security Council by Secretary-General Kofi Annan and by his predecessor.

As I have already indicated, the humanitarian consequences of crises in Africa are indeed devastating. The experience of the refugees in the Great Lakes region proves that the chances of survival of civilian populations involved in conflicts are very often determined by the effective provision of humanitarian assistance and protection. Thus, limiting or impeding the flow of aid can have and often does have tragic consequences for hundreds of thousands of people in the regions affected by military hostilities. The parties to a conflict are obliged to respect the human rights of the civilian population in the territories under their control, and it is imperative that those responsible for violating these rights, including by impeding international relief operations, should be brought to justice.

We hope that this debate will give momentum to the process of freeing Africa of current conflicts and of removing the prospects of potential ones. This is necessary if many other vital problems of Africa are to be efficiently tackled. My country is profoundly convinced that the countries of Africa, torn by ongoing crises, will succeed in rejecting that which brings suffering and misery to their people and building on that which can secure peace and prosperity. We can see no other way for a continent whose boundless human and natural resources remain largely untapped, to the detriment of Africa itself and of the entire world.

My country is proud of its participation in the United Nations-led conflict-solving activities in Africa, including many United Nations peacekeeping operations. This military role, important as it is, is being complemented by assistance to our African partners in other areas, crucial for harmonious development of every country facing fundamental systemic reforms.

The Polish delegation believes that the presidential statement to be adopted by the Security Council at the conclusion of this meeting will significantly enhance prospects for terminating conflicts in Africa. Poland, as a traditionally active member of the United Nations, stands ready to contribute its share to the common endeavours vis-à-vis Africa.

The President: I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Portugal, His Excellency Mr. Jaime Gama.

Mr. Gama (Portugal) *(spoke in Portuguese; English text furnished by the delegation)*: Africa has been a major presence on the agenda of the Security Council. The reasons for the attention given by this body to African affairs are well known. Portugal, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, has sought to contribute to a constructive and productive debate on African problems. In this context, we are always ready to support initiatives that might, in an innovative manner, frame the work of the Council in this area.

We believe that a fresh start is essential in the way the international community deals with issues concerning the African continent. Exceptional circumstances, such as those that today prevail in various African countries, require imaginative and effective answers from all of us.

We have therefore supported since the beginning the excellent initiative of the United States to promote a debate in this format and with this objective in mind. It is a timely debate, and it constitutes a clear sign of the interest of the United Nations in contributing decisively to the maintenance of peace and security in Africa. The welcome presence among us of the Chairman and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) is a clear indication of the importance of this initiative. I also salute the United Nations Secretary-

General, whose marked concern for Africa has been demonstrated in a number of concrete cases.

The Portuguese Government welcomes this meeting of the Security Council on the understanding that it is not an end in itself. Many words have been spoken about the big challenges that are faced by the African continent, but these have not always been translated into practical action. The report and the recommendations that are today being requested from the United Nations Secretary-General will certainly be a step in the right direction.

Strengthening the ties that bind Portugal and Africa is one of the priorities of Portuguese foreign policy. I would like to recall some of the initiatives that reflect this commitment. In the first place, Portugal submitted to its partners in the European Union a proposal for the holding of a Euro-African summit, aimed at establishing, for the first time, a political dialogue at the very highest level between the two continents. The main goal is to place Africa at the top of the international agenda, as a continent whose dimensions and economic potential deserve a new model of relations. At the European Council meeting in Amsterdam, which took place last June, it was agreed that the summit should take place by the year 2000, and talks are starting with our African partners on that subject.

Portugal has been participating in several United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa through an active presence with the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ), the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM), the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA) and the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

We have also been allocating considerable resources to aid development in various African countries, and we have argued in international forums that funds should be provided commensurate with the demands of the current economic situation in Africa.

Portugal jointly founded the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries with Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe and, across the Atlantic, Brazil. This Community of 200 million people will increase our cooperation and will establish mechanisms of coordination and diplomatic consultation in areas of common interest, which include, naturally and prominently, those relating to Africa. In this context, the seven countries are currently exploring ways to build on their own experiences so as to enable them to contribute to peace actions in Africa.

We know that the difficulties with which various African countries are grappling can ultimately be overcome, carefully and realistically. In Africa, as elsewhere, persistence pays. We sincerely believe that Africans will find the path to political stability and social and economic development, by way of democracy, the rule of law and the respect for human rights.

We also believe that one of the main priorities of the international community should be to support initiatives aimed at preventing emerging conflicts in Africa, as well as the creation of mechanisms that, would establish the conditions necessary for their peaceful and negotiated resolution at a more advanced stage. The main elements that should orient our action in this area are clear.

First, Portugal believes that it is indispensable to have the active association of African countries — and their representative organizations, above all the OAU — in the development of doctrine and concepts on which those initiatives are based and in the implementation of those mechanisms. In this context, we consider that the concept of "African ownership" is particularly suitable; however, it should be made clear that this concept cannot be seen as a pretext for disengagement from Africa on the part of the international community. On the contrary, the aim is to help African countries acquire the capacities to play a more effective role in the resolution of their own problems, avoiding the recourse to external solutions, which have often brought to bear negative effects.

Secondly, we advocate that the Security Council continue to exercise fully its responsibilities under the United Nations Charter, with regard to peacekeeping and other operations, and in cooperation with other United Nations organs and agencies.

Thirdly, we would like to widen this debate on African security, which has centred excessively on technical and operational aspects, to include questions related to peace-building.

Indeed, a formal peace, guaranteed by military forces, should be complemented by conditions aimed at sustaining a material peace, freely accepted by the interested parties. As the Secretary-General pointed out in his opening statement to the fifty-second General Assembly:

"We aspire to a United Nations that can act with greater unity of purpose, coherence of efforts and responsiveness in pursuit of peace and progress". (See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Plenary Meetings*, 5th meeting.)

A final word to express the sincere hope of the Portuguese Government that the serious conflicts and disputes which still divide African countries will shortly be resolved, through dialogue and development. In this way, an end may be brought to the serious humanitarian crises that plague some parts of the continent. As a member of the Security Council, and as a country which has in Africa hundreds of thousands of its countrymen, Portugal will not fail to help Africa and Africans reach that objective.

The President: I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, His Excellency Mr. Chong Ha Yoo.

Mr. Yoo (Republic of Korea): The Republic of Korea welcomes and supports the initiative taken by the United States as President of the Security Council for the month of September in convening this special ministerial session of the Security Council on Africa.

During this decade, Africa has made great strides towards stability, democracy and prosperity. However, armed conflicts persist in some quarters of the continent, threatening regional peace and security. These conflicts are inflicting enormous suffering on innocent civilians by causing massive dislocations of people, humanitarian distress and serious violations of human rights. Furthermore, they are destroying the very resources that are essential for social and economic development.

To meet these challenges, the international community has applied a vast amount of energy and resources, both through the Security Council and through other United Nations organs and agencies, often in cooperation with regional organizations. The overall trend in the Council's response to conflicts in Africa is clearly towards greater engagement in the region. The Republic of Korea welcomes this trend and firmly believes that the Council can do more, with greater consistency and effectiveness. The Secretary-General plays an important bridging role in the coordination of the efforts of the international community for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, as well as humanitarian and development activities, in Africa. In this context, we particularly appreciate the undertaking of the Secretary-General to hold frequent consultations with the members of the Security Council on issues requiring the Council's urgent action.

The Republic of Korea believes that conflict resolution in Africa requires a comprehensive approach that takes into account the complex range of causes and consequences of conflict in that region. In this regard, I would like to make a few suggestions.

First, further efforts should be made to enhance coordination between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, as well as coordination with subregional organizations and arrangements. We are encouraged by the increasing cooperation between the Security Council and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution; the recent success of the joint undertaking of the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in regional peacekeeping; and the appointment of a joint United Nations-OAU Special Representative for the Great Lakes region. Such cooperation, we believe, enables the Council to draw on the regional organizations' local expertise and resources. In its deliberations, we believe the Council should duly take into account the views of the regional organizations regarding situations in which they have a clear and direct interest.

The United Nations and regional arrangements should also concentrate more on crisis prevention. As we know, it is always less costly to prevent crises than to react to them. The international community also needs to continue helping regional organizations to strengthen their capacity for peacekeeping. Capacity building is important because it not only enables a swifter response to conflict; it also ultimately empowers African countries to resolve regional problems by themselves.

My second point concerns humanitarian suffering: an immediate outcome of conflict. It is virtually impossible to provide effective relief and protection to refugees and internally displaced persons in an environment where the parties to a conflict refuse to respect basic norms of international humanitarian law. In this context, we wish to emphasize the importance of the ongoing efforts to establish an international criminal court. We look forward to the study by the Secretary-General on how we can better protect humanitarian assistance to refugees in conflict situations, as requested in the presidential statement adopted by the Council last June.

Thirdly, the international community should make a more resolute effort to staunch arms flows into conflict areas which increase humanitarian suffering and hinder conflict resolution. In particular, we need to ensure stricter compliance with the arms embargoes imposed by the Security Council vis-à-vis conflict areas in Africa. Even if resources are scarce, we should seriously explore the possibility of creating a concrete mechanism to encourage the cooperation of neighbouring countries in the implementation of embargoes and the passage of domestic legislation to that end.

Finally, we believe high priority needs to be attached to the consolidation of peace after conflicts have been resolved. Failure to do so leaves the fragile peace vulnerable to collapse and risks wasting all the resources that went into achieving it in the first place. Furthermore, we should emphatically voice our support for democracy whenever it is established and highlight the importance of channelling ethnic and other differences into the democratic process.

We also believe that regional efforts in the socio-economic fields, such as the African Economic Community and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, are vital for ensuring the continent's long-term peace and prosperity and breaking the vicious circle of poverty and war. They therefore deserve our full support. To help maintain the encouraging pace of economic reform in Africa, we need to create an enabling external environment by enhancing trade opportunities through improved market access, fostering greater domestic and foreign investment, and alleviating the debt burden. The Bretton Woods institutions can facilitate this effort by encouraging sound economic policy management and the construction of basic infrastructure.

Before closing, let me stress how important it is that every Member State continue their commitment to the cause of peace and prosperity in Africa. The Republic of Korea has consistently and earnestly worked for this cause, both through its participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations in the region, such as the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) and the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), and through its contributions to humanitarian and development programmes. We will continue to do so. And we hope to see today's welcome initiative followed up by concrete action. We have full confidence in the Secretary-General, and look forward to his report, which will lay the basis for more concerted action towards a brighter future for the African people.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, His Excellency Mr. Yevgeny Primakov.

Mr. Primakov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): We consider the discussion by the Security Council of the current situation in Africa to be important and timely. One can hardly expect the world to develop harmoniously over the long term if African States — which account for nearly one third of the international community — continue to find themselves in a "highly seismic" zone. The other side of the coin is that 33 out of 48 of the world's poorest countries are in Africa, whose soil contains an enormous wealth of mineral resources.

Moreover, the reality is that lack of security and increased ethnic, religious and social disintegration prevent many African countries from effecting the political and economic changes they badly need. The toll is heavy: hundreds of thousands of deaths and millions of refugees.

In the area of socio-economic assistance to the African continent, the international community has already developed a number of general and sectoral programmes, including the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, which was launched by the Secretary-General. I think that this meeting of the Security Council serves to prove that we all realize the urgent necessity for a similar coordinated strategy for maintaining peace and stability there.

In this regard, we are not at all beginning from scratch. The Security Council and the United Nations in general have already gained a wealth of experience in resolving disagreements between States. But we should admit that the world community has not yet reached the required level of effective response to the conflicts of a new generation. These are mainly internal in character, but they jeopardize regional peace and security in terms of human and material casualties and cultural and ecological losses. Moreover, in this sphere there is the negative experience of interference on the part of the international community.

I am referring to Somalia above all.

No doubt, Africans themselves should be the first to act to resolve such conflicts. They are willing to do so and, as the successful activity of African contingents in Liberia and the Central African Republic demonstrates, their efforts deserve support.

We suggest that we collectively reflect on how we can strengthen the role of African regional organizations, primarily that of the Organization of African Unity, both in peacemaking efforts and in preventive diplomacy. Naturally, to successfully achieve these goals we should substantially consolidate interaction between that Organization and the United Nations.

We also believe it is time to discuss proposals on setting up a joint African force and other inter-State peacekeeping structures. I would like to emphasize in this regard that the international legal basis for peacemaking, including on the African continent, should continue to be the Charter of the United Nations, the decisions of the Security Council and the relevant international, bilateral and multilateral agreements.

No coercive actions — either in the form of sanctions or, certainly, military force — should be taken by regional structures unless authorized by the Security Council. The Security Council, in its turn, could rely more on the coordinated opinion of Africans themselves in its search for approaches to solving the various problems on the continent. This refers in particular to the documents of the Organization of African Unity with regard to the situation regarding Libya. We have to find the way to resolve this issue. I believe that the proposal of the Organization of African Unity on the Lockerbie case deserves attention.

The Russian Federation approaches the issues of cooperation with Africa, and within Africa, from the position of open, equal and mutually beneficial partnership without *diktat*, ideological stereotypes or national bias. We are ready to participate in international efforts to promote Africa's peacekeeping capability, but I would like once again to emphasize that external assistance should complement rather than replace the steps to be taken by African States themselves.

Unfortunately, African tom-toms still very often sound the alarm, but we should do all we can for them to convey only good news.

The President: I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Her Excellency Ms. Lena Hjelm-Wallén.

Ms. Hjelm-Wallén (Sweden): Eleven years ago I took part in the General Assembly's special session on Africa. Joint responsibility for Africa's future was a major theme of my statement and of the session itself. This theme is still valid today.

We must be partners for development and also partners for peace and security. The message is clear. Africans do not want special treatment, but equal treatment: access to markets, cooperation with investors, exchange of experiences and cultural interaction.

Sweden has a long-standing and deep involvement in Africa. The Swedish Government is now preparing a new African policy based on partnership. Over the next three years, in contrast to the international trend, our aid budget will increase substantially. Its largest part is allocated to Africa, but aid, among a set of other instruments, should be used to enable African peoples to become masters of their own destiny.

An important part of the role of the United Nations in Africa is to help countries maintain and restore peace and human security. Conflicts in Africa have for a long time required much of the attention of the Security Council. Greater efforts must be directed at preventing armed conflicts. Conflict prevention should involve long-term measures to build an environment where disputes between and within States are resolved peacefully. Sustainable economic and social development, the eradication of poverty, good governance, democracy, and respect for human rights are essential factors.

African Governments share with the rest of the world the responsibility to abide by international agreements, including those on matters such as humanitarian law and the respect for human rights. True partnership is based on respect for differences, but not on different sets of standards, in particular as they affect the essence and purpose of cooperation: to build peace and prosperity and to defend human dignity.

We welcome the growing African involvement in conflict prevention, not least through the Mechanism of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The OAU and subregional organizations are increasingly engaged at all stages of conflict resolution and peacekeeping.

The international community, including the Security Council, has an obvious responsibility in African crises, as it has in other parts of the world. Within the United Nations we should study how the instruments at our

disposal could be used more effectively to prevent and resolve conflicts in cooperation with regional organizations. Except in cases of self-defence, only the Security Council can legally authorize the use of force.

Sweden hopes to see further cooperation between the United Nations the OAU. We welcome the joint efforts of the United Nations and the OAU in the Great Lakes region, in particular the appointment of a Special Representative, Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun. We are also pleased to see contacts between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the OAU on a new humanitarian framework for the Great Lakes region.

Madam President, Sweden deeply appreciates your initiative to organize this ministerial debate on Africa. It is a manifestation of the need for common action between Africa and the world at large. This must not remain an isolated event. We look forward to a wide-ranging discussion between all Members of the United Nations on the basis of recommendations made by the Secretary-General. It should set in motion a process towards practical and concrete follow-up by the Security Council and the General Assembly.

The President: I call on the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, The Right Honourable Robin Cook.

Mr. Cook (United Kingdom): President Mugabe began the discussion by referring to the renaissance throughout Africa, and it is right that at the outset we should recognize the improvements in that continent. Democracy is spreading, good government is taking strong roots in many countries, and the peaceful dismantling of apartheid in South Africa is one of the world's great success stories of the decade.

However, progress in some countries should not hide from us the real problems which remain. Africa is the only continent where there has been no increase in per capita income over recent decades. We in Britain are proud of our reputation as free traders, but, in truth, Africa is the continent which has benefited the least from the opening up of the global economy. Indeed, some analysts claim that sub-Saharan Africa will be a net loser under the recent Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

It need not surprise us that the continent with the least economic progress has produced also the greatest conflicts. Where people are poor and becoming poorer in real terms, inevitably tension thrives. We all share the same shock at the appalling atrocities that are occurring nightly in Algeria. We all roundly condemn such terrorism and call for improvement in the security of the lives of the ordinary people. But we also need to acknowledge that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) package in Algeria over this decade has had the effect of reducing the standard of living of many of its people.

The war on terrorism must be fought on three fronts: better security, political mediation and also economic development. And there are three important ways in which the international community can be of help to Africa.

First, the eradication of poverty. Africa needs our aid. The new Labour Government in Britain is committed to reversing the decline in British aid. Our Chancellor announced last week in Mauritius a new initiative on debt relief which will benefit 300 million of the poorest people, a high proportion of whom live in Africa. Economic development is the theme of next month's Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Britain. We must all, as bilateral donors, as Members of the United Nations and as members of the international financial institutes, use all the instruments at our disposal to promote development in Africa.

The second way we can help is with conflict prevention and peacekeeping. Britain is pleased by the new determination of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to tackle Africa's problems in conjunction with the United Nations. The tragic recent history of the Great Lakes shows how important and also how difficult this is. We cannot be complacent about the United Nations own record. Historians will ask why it was that we did not separate refugees from armed militias and allowed refugee camps to become bases for military adventures. The only answer we can give is that we will never again stand back in the face of genocide.

Nor should we ever condone mass murder. Let us be clear about the intent of those who placed the bomb on the Pan Am flight which exploded over Lockerbie. Their intention was to wipe out every passenger on that plane. All of us around this table travel frequently by air. We above all people have an interest in stopping aeroplanes' being used as a vehicle for terrorism. The charge sheet against the two Libyan nationals who have

been indicted is a full one which compellingly sets out the evidence that they must answer and can answer only if they appear on trial.

I welcome the statement by President Mugabe that he wishes that trial to take place under Scots law. The only place they can face trial under Scots law is in Scotland. There is no legal authority for a Scots court to meet outside Scotland; there is no legal authority in the law of the Netherlands for a court of another jurisdiction to sit in The Hague. We are then conscious of the international interest in this case. That is why we have recently invited Libya, the Organization of African Unity, and any other country around this table that so wishes to send international monitors to attend any trial in Scotland.

Justice, we know, must be seen to be done, but justice must also be carried out. A fair trial which protects the innocent but provides for justice against the guilty is an important basis for universal human rights.

That brings me to the third area in which the international community can be of assistance to Africa, namely, human rights. The compelling lesson from the recent history of Africa is that honest, open and democratic government is crucial to success. Nigeria and the former Zaire are countries rich in resources. The main reasons why their people live in poverty are poor government and self-interest on the parts of those who have ruled them over past years. I welcome, then, the growing pressure from within Africa and African organizations for support for universal rights. The Harare Declaration, which obliges the Commonwealth to take human rights criteria into account, is an African declaration. We must all work to ensure that such declarations, including those of the United Nations, the OAU and the Commonwealth, are observed and practised.

Finally, can I say that there are challenges ahead, and there are problems for the present. But with a genuine partnership, with the commitment of African Governments and with the international community playing the part I have described, then the future can be bright for Africa. It should be a major objective of the Security Council to enable the African lion to follow the Asian tiger into a modern world of prosperity and peace.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Secretary of State of the United States of America.

The United States welcomes this ministerial session of the Council and the opportunity it affords to recognize and support a new quality in Africa's relations with the world.

In many nations, difficult reforms are producing economic growth and progress towards democracy. Although enormous problems remain, we must not let them blind us to the new African leaders who are quietly emerging with intense determination to create new African realities; to replace autocracy and internal strife with democracy, stability and the rule of law; to battle poverty, corruption and despair instead of domestic rivals or hostile neighbours; to become engines of growth rather than outposts of isolation; and to stand before the international community not as supplicants, but as true equals.

Ours is a supporting role. We must listen carefully to what African leaders and African citizens have to say about the challenges they face and the solutions they favour. We must be clear about what our own interests are, and about what we are prepared to do to help Africans to guide change in directions that create new opportunities for their people.

We are requesting that the Secretary-General report on how we can better identify sources of conflict, prevent or resolve them, and help Africans lay the groundwork for peace and prosperity. And we take this opportunity to urge support for the Secretary-General's reform proposals, which provide an important opportunity for the United Nations to use better its resources to address security, humanitarian and development needs in Africa.

Our starting point is peace and security, the Council's traditional responsibility, but we should take this opportunity to look at the broad picture of our interactions with Africa.

A decade ago, Africa was the scene of multiple conflicts fueled, in large measure, by cold-war rivalries and, in southern Africa, by the vicious and destabilizing effects of apartheid.

Today the greatest threats to peace are posed by civil strife caused by ethnic tensions or by straightforward competition for resources and power. These threats are aggravated by the lack, in some societies, of strong and representative institutions of government and by economic prospects so poor that hope is starved and desperation fed.

In this environment, a security strategy must include political, economic and humanitarian components. But to implement these components, a climate of relative safety must be established and maintained. The United Nations is central to meeting those challenges through its peacekeeping operations, good-offices missions, and emergency relief programmes.

Throughout Africa, the United States supports the role of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in preventing and responding to crises, and we are assisting its plan to build a Conflict Management Centre and improve its ability to react quickly to emergencies. We urge the Secretary-General to strengthen the ties between the United Nations, the OAU and Africa's regional security organizations in recognition of the work they are doing.

In Liberia, we congratulate the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for its success in helping to end the civil war and monitoring democratic elections.

We also commend the efforts of the ECOWAS C-5 group of Ministers to bring peace to Sierra Leone, and we are strong supporters of the peace process there. In Angola, as one of three observer States to the Lusaka Protocol, we endorse strongly the efforts of the United Nations, supported by the Southern African Development Community (SADC), to ensure full implementation. We will use the powers of this Council to penalize any party that fails to meet its obligations.

The United States is also working, in partnership with Africans and donors, to enhance the ability of African nations to respond when peacekeeping is needed. This is a capacity-building initiative with long-term goals that is openly conducted and aimed solely at preventing, ending and alleviating the consequences of conflict.

The United States would also welcome the Secretary-General's ideas on improving the overall response of the international community to complex humanitarian emergencies in Africa, including the transition from crisis to development.

We should pay special attention to lessons learned during the past four years in the Great Lakes region and consider steps for ensuring that refugee camps are not used as a safe haven for war criminals or as a base for military operations, as well as steps for achieving justice and accountability in the aftermath of large-scale violations of human rights. And we suggest that the Secretary-General outline a comprehensive approach for the issues still confronting the Great Lakes: preventing further conflict and promoting human rights, democratization and reconstruction.

In shaping his ideas, we urge the Secretary-General to consult closely with leaders in the region and to encourage a spirit of mutual respect and mutual responsibility. At the same time, Africans themselves must reject the culture of impunity that has protected those guilty of gross violations of human rights or the export of terror to other nations. In this regard, let me say today that there can be no compromise with Libya when it comes to terrorism. With respect to the case of Pan Am 103, the responsibility for the effect of this Council's actions on the people of Libya does not rest with us. It rests squarely on the Government of Libya. We must be united in our demand for full compliance with this Council's resolutions. To do less is to insult the memory of those who died so tragically and to deny the victims' families the demands of justice.

United Nations efforts also play a central role in Africa's plans for development — development that gives citizens more opportunity, government more capacity and peace a firm foundation.

Today we know that in Africa, as elsewhere, the primary impetus for economic growth must come from the private sector. That requires strategies that make indigenous investment rewarding and foreign investment welcome. It requires privatization, more open markets and regulatory and financial reform. And it requires efforts to improve education, training and health care, so that all people, men and women, may reach their potential.

Today we know that aid cannot substitute for reform. But that does not mean stepping back from the good that only aid can do.

Last year the United States contributed more than $1.5 billion in direct humanitarian and development aid, plus another $1 billion through multilateral organizations such as the World Bank and the African Development Bank. In addition, more than 2,400 Peace Corps volunteers are working in Africa in a total of 29 countries. And President Clinton has proposed a Partnership for Economic Growth and Opportunity to stimulate commerce, reduce debt, encourage investment and provide technical aid.

It is no accident that Africa's current economic upturn is paralleled by a growing embrace of democratic principles.

Today more than half of the 48 countries in sub-Saharan Africa have leaders chosen in elections that were deemed by international observers to have been free and fair. This is important politically and economically, because development depends on people. A democratic people free to exchange ideas, publish thoughts, organize labour and invest capital will build a richer -- and ultimately more stable — society than a people shackled by repression.

Free elections are a necessary part of democracy, but they are not sufficient in themselves. The United States is committed to working with Africa and the international community to help develop durable and effective democratic institutions, such as legislative assemblies, judiciaries and an independent press. We have democracy-building programmes in 20 countries and are also helping to strengthen civil society in order to improve governance and bolster the rule of law.

Finally, we welcome Africa's increasing contributions to the solution of global problems that concern us all, such as the proliferation of crime, terrorism, environmental degradation and the spread of infectious disease. Today, the greatest divide in the world is not between East and West or North and South — it is between those trapped by the grievances and preconceptions of the past and those who have the vision and courage to shape the future.

We are all here this morning to salute the Africans who have that vision and courage and to make sure we have the vision and determination needed to support them.

I am pleased to announce my own plans to visit the continent before the end of the year, to meet with leaders and people there and to make as real as I can America's commitment to stand with Africans as they realize long-delayed aspirations for true freedom, growing prosperity and simple human dignity.

President Nelson Mandela once said that, in the history of nations, generations have made their mark by appreciating critical turning points and seizing the moment; that better life will be achieved only if we shed the temptation to proceed casually along the road — only if we take the opportunities that beckon.

Let us take that road together.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council met on 25 September 1997, at the level of Foreign Ministers, to consider the need for a concerted international effort to promote peace and security in Africa.

"The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to Africa in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The Council also reaffirms the principles of political independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of all Member States.

"The Security Council notes that African States have made significant strides towards democratization, economic reform, and respect for and protection of human rights in order to achieve political stability, peace, and sustainable economic and social development.

"Despite these positive developments, the Security Council remains gravely concerned by the number and intensity of armed conflicts on the continent. Such conflicts threaten regional peace, cause massive human dislocation and suffering, perpetuate instability and divert resources from long-term development. The Security Council reaffirms the responsibility of all Member States to settle their international disputes by peaceful means and its own primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

"The Security Council welcomes the important contributions of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), including through its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, as well as those of subregional arrangements, in preventing and resolving conflicts in Africa, and looks forward to a stronger partnership between the United Nations and the OAU, as well as subregional arrangements, in conformity with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. The Council supports enhancement of the capacity of African States to contribute to peacekeeping operations, including in Africa, in accordance with the Charter

of the United Nations. The Council highlights the important contribution of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty to international peace and security.

"The Security Council fully supports the engagement of the United Nations in Africa through its diplomatic, peacekeeping, humanitarian, economic development and other activities, which are often undertaken in cooperation with regional and subregional organizations. The United Nations makes an important contribution to the efforts of Africa to construct a future of peace, democracy, justice and prosperity. The Council underlines the importance of the commitment of the United Nations through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other humanitarian organizations to assist the efforts of African States to address humanitarian and refugee crises in accordance with international humanitarian law.

"The Security Council considers that the challenges in Africa demand a more comprehensive response. To this end, the Council requests the Secretary-General to submit a report containing concrete recommendations to the Council by February 1998 regarding the sources of conflict in Africa, ways to prevent and address these conflicts, and how to lay the foundation for durable peace and economic growth following their resolution. Because the scope of this report may extend beyond the purview of the Security Council, the Council invites the Secretary-General to submit his report to the General Assembly and other relevant bodies of the United Nations for action as they deem appropriate, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

"The Security Council affirms its intention to review promptly the recommendations of the Secretary-General with a view to taking steps consistent with its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/1997/46.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.